Four Nations, Many Stories

Compare Native nations in Alabama during the colonial period and nineteenth century.

SS24.AS.6a "Compare and contrast the major Native American tribes in Alabama of the colonial period and nineteenth century."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details the nations shared, then circle four details that show differences and label each circled detail H for homeland, G for government, or R for removal.

Across Alabama, Across Time

1 By the early 1800s, several Native nations had long-established communities in the region that became Alabama. In the northeast, Cherokee communities occupied mountain valleys; in the northwest, Chickasaw communities lived near the Tennessee River. Choctaw towns lay mainly in the west and southwest, while Muscogee (Creek) towns were concentrated along rivers in central and eastern Alabama. These were distinct peoples, not four branches of one tribe. Their homelands also reached beyond today's state lines. Rivers helped all four peoples travel and trade, but the waterways and territories they used differed. A traveler crossing Alabama would encounter several Native nations rather than a single Native culture.

2 For all four nations, growing corn, beans, and squash supported families, and hunting and trading added resources. Yet political life did not follow one pattern. Muscogee towns formed a confederacy; towns made many of their own decisions. Cherokee leaders adopted a written national constitution in 1827, and Cherokee writers used a syllabary developed by Sequoyah to print a newspaper beginning in 1828. Choctaw and Chickasaw leaders also negotiated with the United States as representatives of their own nations. Shared farming and trade did not erase differences in political organization or written communication.

3 As U.S. settlement expanded, the Creek War of 1813 to 1814 divided Muscogee towns; afterward, the United States forced a vast land cession from them. In the 1830s, federal removal policy pressured all four nations to surrender land and move west. The Choctaw signed a removal treaty in 1830; the Muscogee signed a land cession treaty in 1832. The Chickasaw also signed a removal treaty in 1832, and most Cherokee people were forcibly removed in 1838 and 1839. Although their routes and agreements differed, removal caused suffering and loss across these nations. Their descendants still live today.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Cherokee and Chickasaw homelands in Alabama differ?

2. What difference in political organization does the passage describe between Muscogee towns and the Cherokee Nation?

3. How were the Choctaw and Muscogee experiences with U.S. treaties in the 1830s alike and different?

4. How did removal affect both the Chickasaw and Cherokee, and what different event does the passage name for each?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A museum label claims these four nations had identical experiences. Write an 80 to 105 word replacement label that names all four nations, explains one shared practice and two differences among them, and describes an impact of removal they shared.

ANSWER KEY

Four Nations, Many Stories

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.AS.6a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details the nations shared, then circle four details that show differences and label each circled detail H for homeland, G for government, or R for removal. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Cherokee and Chickasaw homelands in Alabama differ?	**Cherokee communities occupied northeastern mountain valleys, while Chickasaw communities lived in the northwest near the Tennessee River.**
2	What difference in political organization does the passage describe between Muscogee towns and the Cherokee Nation?	**Muscogee towns formed a confederacy and made many decisions locally; Cherokee leaders adopted a written national constitution in 1827.**
3	How were the Choctaw and Muscogee experiences with U.S. treaties in the 1830s alike and different?	**Both faced federal pressure to give up land and move west. The Choctaw signed a removal treaty in 1830, while the Muscogee signed a land cession treaty in 1832.**
4	How did removal affect both the Chickasaw and Cherokee, and what different event does the passage name for each?	**Removal caused suffering and loss for both. The Chickasaw signed a removal treaty in 1832; most Cherokee people were forcibly removed in 1838 and 1839.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Calling the four nations identical hides both common ground and important differences. Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Muscogee families all grew crops and traded, yet they occupied different parts of Alabama. Chickasaw communities lived in the northwest, while Choctaw towns were mainly in the west and southwest. Muscogee towns made many decisions locally, while Cherokee leaders adopted a national constitution in 1827. Federal removal policy harmed all four nations, but the Chickasaw signed a removal treaty in 1832, while most Cherokee people were forced west in 1838 and 1839. Shared pressures did not make these peoples one culture.

Accept accurate comparisons phrased differently from the passage. Do not require students to imply that only Cherokee leaders had a national government or that Muscogee leaders never negotiated treaties.